

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An information terminal apparatus having a collation function, comprising:

5 an information input unit which has a detection surface exposed outside the apparatus, reads a fingerprint that touches the detection surface, and generates fingerprint data;

10 a control unit which collates fingerprint data input from the information input unit and permits operation of the apparatus;

a protection unit which can move to a position where the detection surface of the information input unit is covered and a position where the detection surface is exposed; and

15 a moving mechanism which biases the protection unit to a covering position of the information input unit.

2. An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the protection unit is formed by coupling a chain, is
20 flexible, is compactly stored at a storage position, covers the detection surface when the protection unit is extended, and exposes the detection surface when the protection unit is contracted.

25 3. An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the protection unit is formed by coupling a plurality of shutter type covers, is flexible, is compactly stored at a storage position, covers the detection surface

when the protection unit is extended, and exposes the detection surface when the protection unit is contracted.

5 4. An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the protection unit is stretchy like a bellows, is compactly stored at a storage position, covers the detection surface when the protection unit is extended, and exposes the detection surface when the protection unit is contracted.

10 5. An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the protection unit is formed by coupling a plurality of slide type covers, is stretchy, is compactly stored at a storage position, covers the detection surface when the protection unit is extended, and exposes the
15 detection surface when the protection unit is contracted.

 6. An apparatus according to claim 1, which further comprises a movement detection unit which detects that the protection unit has been moved to the
20 covering position and an exposure position of the information input unit, and in which the control unit activates the information terminal apparatus on the basis of a detection signal from the movement detection unit.

25 7. An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the protection unit includes

 a cover which is pivotally attached by a hinge to

a sensor window from which the detection surface is exposed, and

an opening/closing button which can switch between a closed state of the cover in order to cover the detection surface and an open state of the cover in order to expose the detection surface.

8. An information terminal apparatus having a collation function, comprising:

an information input unit which has a detection surface exposed outside the apparatus, reads a fingerprint that touches the detection surface, and generates fingerprint data;

a control unit which collates fingerprint data input from the information input unit and permits operation of the apparatus;

a protection unit which can move to a position where the detection surface of the information input unit is covered and a position where the detection surface is exposed, and has a film closely facing the detection surface; and

a moving mechanism which biases the protection unit to a covering position of the information input unit,

wherein a state in which fingerprint collation is performed on the detection surface when the protection unit moves to an exposure position and a state in which handwriting input is performed on the film when the

protection unit is located at the covering position are switched.

9. An apparatus according to claim 8, wherein the protection unit includes

5 a cover which is pivotally attached by a hinge to a sensor window from which the detection surface is exposed, and

 an opening/closing button which can switch between a closed state of the cover in order to cover the
10 detection surface and an open state of the cover in order to expose the detection surface.

10. An information terminal apparatus having a collation function, comprising:

 an information input unit which has a detection
15 surface exposed outside the apparatus, reads a fingerprint that touches the detection surface, and generates fingerprint data;

 a protection unit which can move to a position where the detection surface of the information input
20 unit is covered and a position where the detection surface is exposed;

 a movement detection unit which detects that the protection unit has been moved to a covering position and an exposure position of the information input unit;
25 and

 a control unit which activates the apparatus on the basis of a detection signal from the movement

detection unit,

wherein control in use is inhibited and interrupted to enable another control in synchronism with movement of the protection unit.

5 11. An information terminal apparatus having a collation function, comprising:

an information input unit which has a detection surface exposed outside the apparatus, reads a fingerprint that touches the detection surface, and
10 generates fingerprint data;

a protection unit which can move to a position where the detection surface of the information input unit is covered and a position where the detection surface is exposed;

15 a moving mechanism which biases the protection unit to a covering position of the information input unit;

a movement detection unit which detects that the protection unit has been moved to the covering position
20 and an exposure position of the information input unit;

a control unit which activates the apparatus on the basis of a detection signal from the movement detection unit; and

a stop unit which stops the apparatus,
25 wherein the activated apparatus is stopped by the stop unit on the basis of the detection signal.

12. An information terminal apparatus having a

collation function using a fingerprint sensor which detects a fingerprint, comprising a fingerprint sensor moving mechanism including

5 a protection unit which can move to a position where the fingerprint sensor is covered and a position where the fingerprint sensor is exposed, and

 a spring which biases the protection unit so as to hold the protection unit at a covering position of the fingerprint sensor or return the protection unit.